

File GSA

RESPONSE TO ADP PLANNING CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

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IAC PANEL SESSION

IT IS A DISTINCT PLEASURE TO TALK TO YOU REGARDING OUR VIEWS OF THE INTERAGENCY ADP COMMITTEE'S PLANNING CONFERENCE HELD AT AIRLIE HOUSE THIS PAST FEBRUARY. AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, THE AUTOMATED DATA AND TELE - COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE OF THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION IS THE SPONSOR OF THE INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON ADP AND WE THEREFORE TAKE KEEN INTEREST IN ITS ACTIVITIES. I THINK IT IS ALSO VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE BROAD SPECTRUM OF DATA PROCESSING USERS AND PROVIDERS THAT ARE HERE TODAY ARE ABLE TO HEAR ON A FIRST-HAND BASIS THE VIEW OF GSA, OMB AND NBS ON THE PLANNING CONFERENCE.

FIRST AS SPONSORS, OUR OBJECTIVE WAS TO ENSURE CLOSER COORDINATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE MANAGEMENT NEEDS FOR ADP IN 1970 AND BEYOND.

SECOND WE FULLY EXPECTED THAT THE PEER GROUP OF GOVERNMENT ADP WOULD ARRIVE AT CONFLICTING POSITIONS AND PRIORITIES.

THIRD

A HOPE FOR A BROADER PERSPECTIVE WAS

DESIRED TO RECOGNIZE SOME CONDITIONS WHICH
ARE OUTSIDE OF OUR CONTROL -- YET IT'S THE
WORLD WE LIVE IN.

LAST,

AND HOPEFULLY, NOT LEAST, IT IS OUR DESIRE
TO BE SELF-CRITICAL OF OUR PERFORMANCE AND,
AT THE SAME TIME, TO DEMONSTRATE THE AWARE-
NESS AND COMMUNICATION FLOW (RECOGNIZE I DID
NOT SAY CONCURRENCE) BETWEEN ADTS, OMB AND
NBS.

IN THAT RESPECT, I ALWAYS MARVEL AT THE FINESSE RUTH
HAS AT DEALING WITH COMPLEX ISSUES. I ALSO PAY ATTENTION
TO HOW WALLY ALWAYS MANAGES TO HAVE HIS CAKE AND EAT IT
TOO. THEY, OF COURSE, ARE ALWAYS WATCHING ME TO SEE IF
I AM GOING TO BITE OFF MORE THAN I CAN CHEW.

MY REMARKS ARE AIMED AT ADDRESSING THE GENERAL AREAS OF
RECOMMENDATIONS RATHER THAN EACH SPECIFIC ONE; FURTHER
I WILL DEFER TO BOTH RUTH AND WALLY TO ADDRESS THEIR
POSITIONS ON THE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO
THEIR ORGANIZATIONS.

THE FORMAT OF THE CONFERENCE CALLED FOR SIX
PANELS, WHICH WERE ESTABLISHED TO FOCUS ON MANY OF
THE KEY ISSUES FACING US TODAY. THEY WERE GIVEN FREE
REIGN TO DISCUSS AND RECOMMEND THE DIRECTION FOR FUTURE
ACTIONS. SOMETIMES THEY HIT THE MARK BUT THEN AGAIN
THEY OCCASIONALLY WENT A LITTLE FAR AFIELD. I DO NOT
WANT TO BE OVERLY CRITICAL OR DENIGRATE THE EFFORTS OF
THE PEOPLE INVOLVED; AN OPEN ENVIRONMENT, NECESSARY
TO GERMINATE NEW AND VALUABLE INITIATIVES, OFTEN SPAWNS
AT LEAST AN EQUAL NUMBER OF STERILE IDEAS. MANY OF THE
RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE AND DISCUSSED BEFORE.
OFTEN, HOWEVER, IT WAS IN ANOTHER CONTEXT OR ANOTHER
TIME. YET, SINCE MANY OF THESE ISSUES ARE STILL WITH US,
IT IS WORTHWHILE THAT THEY BE RAISED AGAIN TO ENSURE
THAT WE FOCUS ON THEM AND EVALUATE WHETHER THE
CURRENT POSTURES ARE ADEQUATE OR NEW POSITIONS NEED
BE TAKEN.

IN EVALUATING THE RECOMMENDATIONS, IT WOULD APPEAR
THEY COVER THE BROAD SPECTRUM FROM PLATITUDES TO
ANSWERS TO REAL GUT ISSUES OF TODAY. EACH AREA AND
RECOMMENDATION HAS BEEN EVALUATED AS THE PASSIONED

HASTILY ADD THAT IN MANY INSTANCES IT WOULD APPEAR THAT WE WERE HEARING AN EMOTIONAL RATHER THAN A REASONED PLEA.

FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE AREA OF OVERSIGHT ONE GOT THE IMPRESSION IN MANY OF THE PANEL DISCUSSIONS THAT THE CONFERENCE WAS VIEWED AS A 20TH CENTURY RUNYMEADE WHERE AGENCIES WOULD BAN TOGETHER AND SIGN A MAGNA CARTA FREEING THEMSELVES FROM GSA'S, OMB'S AND THE CONGRESS' ADP OVERSIGHT ROLE. AS IT HAPPENS, TODAY IS NEARLY THE 761ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE MAGNA CARTA. BUT, BEYOND THAT COINCIDENCE, I HAVE BAD NEWS. WE, AND I MEAN ALL OF US, ARE IN FOR MORE OVERSIGHT, NOT LESS. ONE HAS ONLY TO REVIEW RECENT EVENTS TO COME TO THIS CONCLUSION. THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT AND THE PRIVACY ACT WERE IMPLEMENTED BECAUSE THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH FELT WE WERE NOT CONDUCTING OURSELVES IN THE WAY WE SHOULD. INDEED, PART OF THE PRIVACY ACT SEEMED TO BE DIRECTED TOWARDS PROVIDING GREATER VISIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY INTO HOW WE RUN OUR ADP OPERATIONS. THERE IS GROWING CONGRESSIONAL

REVIEW OVER AGENCIES' INDIVIDUAL SYSTEMS PROCUREMENTS. IN AREAS WHERE THEY SUSPECT ABUSES, THEY ARE REQUESTING GAO AUDITS. OVER THE PAST TWO MONTHS, WE HAVE SEEN AUDITS IN THE AREAS OF ADP SECURITY AND AUTOMATED DECISION-MAKING APPLICATIONS. BOTH OF THOSE GAO EFFORTS EXPOSED NEW AREAS WHERE I AM AFRAID GREATER OVERSIGHT WILL BE SOUGHT. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE AVID INTEREST AND CONCERN OF CONGRESS AND OMB HAS RESULTED IN EXTENDING THE PROCUREMENT CYCLE FOR EVERY MAJOR SYSTEM WE HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH DURING THIS FISCAL YEAR. THE PROBLEM IS THAT IN VIRTUALLY EVERY CASE INADEQUATE DOCUMENTATION OF REQUIREMENTS, COST ANALYSIS, OR SYSTEM DESIGN HAS GENERATED GREATER SUSPICION BY THOSE WITH OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITY. YET, THERE WERE A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS THAT TOUCHED UPON THE AREA OF OVERSIGHT.

ONE TALKED ABOUT INCREASING THE DOLLAR THRESHOLD FOR AUTOMATIC DELEGATION FOR THE COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT OF ADP EQUIPMENT. ANOTHER ADDRESSED BLANKET DELEGATIONS OF PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY. LET ME SAY RIGHT NOW, THAT WE HAVE BEEN WORKING ON THESE TWO PROPOSALS FOR SOME TIME. WE ARE DEVELOPING THE CRITERIA TO BE USED FOR

CERTIFYING AGENCIES TO CONDUCT THEIR OWN COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENTS. IT MAY INVOLVE AN ANNUAL PROCUREMENT PLAN WITH FOLLOW-UP AUDITS. THIS IS JUST ONE WAY WE ARE CONSIDERING THE NOTION OF EXPANDED PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY ADDRESSED BY THE RECOMMENDATIONS. ANOTHER PANEL REQUESTED CLARIFICATION OF GSA'S ROLE IN REVIEWING AGENCIES' APPLICATION PLANS ALTHOUGH A SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION WAS NOT MADE. STILL ANOTHER PANEL EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO SAY THAT THERE WAS TOO MUCH OVERSIGHT. THIS POSITION SEEMED JUSTIFIED BY MANY OF THE AGENCY PARTICIPANTS. I AM SURE YOU ALL APPRECIATE THAT THE VALUE OF OVERSIGHT IS ONE OF PERSPECTIVE DEPENDING WHETHER YOU ARE THE OVERSEER OR THE OVERSEEN.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, LET'S RECOGNIZE JUST WHAT ADTS' ROLE IS IN ADP MANAGEMENT. WE LOOK TO AGENCIES TO IDENTIFY THEIR REQUIREMENTS. WE THEN EXPECT AN UNBIASED REVIEW OF ALL RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO SATISFY THE NEED: VIA OFF-LOADING, SHARING, REUTILIZATION, ETC. THAT IS THE PRINCIPAL SERVICE WE EXPECT TO PROVIDE. TO DO IT ADEQUATELY, INFORMATION IS REQUIRED, ALSO, ON OUR PART; RAPID, ACCURATE HANDLING IS NECESSARY -- NOT LIKE THE STORY I HEARD THE OTHER DAY REGARDING A DEPARTMENT OF

COMMERCE RFP. GSA WORK ON THAT RESULTED IN SOME 20 DRAFTS AND THE RFP STILL CAME OUT POORLY. IT IS SUGGESTED THAT WE HAD BETTER START GETTING OUR HOUSES IN ORDER.

AGENCIES SHOULD NOW START TO DETERMINE JUST WHAT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS IT HAS, WHETHER THEY ARE RESPONSIVE TO BOTH AGENCIES AND PUBLIC NEEDS. UNLESS WE DO THIS OURSELVES, SOMEBODY WILL TELL US TO DO IT, BUT WORSE, WILL TELL US HOW TO DO IT. INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, THIS RECOMMENDATION WAS MADE BY TWO SEPARATE PANELS AT AIRLIE HOUSE. I THINK THIS WAS THE MOST INNOVATIVE AND RELEVANT RECOMMENDATION TO EMERGE AT THE CONFERENCE.

IN THE AREA OF SHARING, A RECOMMENDATION WAS MADE THAT GSA COLLECT AND MAKE AVAILABLE MORE DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING THE CAPABILITIES OF SYSTEMS WHICH HAVE TIME AVAILABLE FOR SHARING AND THAT SUCH INFORMATION BE MADE AVAILABLE ON-LINE TO HANDLE INQUIRIES AT GSA REGIONS. WE HAVE RECOGNIZED SUCH A NEED FOR QUITE A WHILE AND HAVE, RIGHT NOW, IN THE FINAL DESIGN PHASE, A REVISION TO OUR

ADP MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM THAT WOULD MAINTAIN AND MAKE AVAILABLE SUCH DATA. IT SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED BY LATE SUMMER OF NEXT YEAR.

ANOTHER RECOMMENDATION IN THE AREA OF SHARING WAS TO USE THE ADP REVOLVING FUND AS A FINANCING VEHICLE TO PROMOTE GREATER UTILIZATION OF THE EXISTING EQUIPMENT INVENTORY. WE SUPPORT SUCH A CONCEPT, HOWEVER, ONCE WE START AUGMENTING EXISTING EQUIPMENT THROUGH WHATEVER MEANS ARE EMPLOYED TO MEET OTHER AGENCY REQUIREMENTS, WE ARE NO LONGER IN THE SHARING PROGRAM. RATHER, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT ESTABLISHING JOINT USE OR FEDERAL DATA PROCESSING CENTERS. WE ARE CURRENTLY EXAMINING A NUMBER OF SUCH OPPORTUNITIES AND HOPE TO EXPAND THIS ACTIVITY WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ADHERING TO THE POLICY ENUNCIATED IN OMB CIRCULAR A-76.

THERE WERE A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING BOTH SHARING AND SOFTWARE. ALTHOUGH NO ONE PANEL HAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF SOFTWARE AT THE PLANNING CONFERENCE, IT WAS QUITE INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT MANY OF THE GROUPS DID TOUCH UPON THE PROBLEM OF HOW THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CAN MORE ECONOMICALLY AND EFFICIENTLY ACQUIRE AND UTILIZE SOFTWARE. I THINK A

BRIEF REVIEW OF GSA'S EFFORTS TO DATE IN THIS AREA AND SOME OF THE THINGS WE WILL BE DOING IN THE NEAR FUTURE WILL INDICATE THAT WE ARE BEING RESPONSIVE TO MANY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OFFERED AT THE PLANNING CONFERENCE.

THE SOFTWARE EXCHANGE PROGRAM HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED WITH THE PUBLICATION OF AN FPMR AMENDMENT IN MARCH OF THIS YEAR. UNDER THIS PROGRAM, AGENCIES WILL BE REQUIRED TO REVIEW THE CATALOGUE OF SOFTWARE ALREADY DEVELOPED AND AVAILABLE FOR SHARING PRIOR TO DEVELOPING OR PROCURING NEW SOFTWARE PROGRAMS. A DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY HAS BEEN MADE TO THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE TO OPERATE THE PROGRAM, AND THE PROGRAM WILL BE ADMINISTERED UNDER GSA'S ADP REVOLVING FUND. THE NOTION OF A FEDERAL SOFTWARE EXCHANGE PROGRAM HAS BEEN AROUND FOR MANY YEARS. HAVING FINALLY GOTTEN OFF THE LAUNCHING PAD, GSA AND OMB WILL VERY CLOSELY MONITOR HOW IT IS OPERATING AND AGENCIES' PARTICIPATION IN IT. I THINK IT IS PREMATURE, AT THIS TIME, TO GUESS AT FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE PROGRAM AS IMPLIED BY ONE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AT THE PLANNING CONFERENCE. IT PROPOSED THERE BE A

RECOGNIZED, PERMANENTLY STAFFED CENTRAL AGENCY TO
COORDINATE AND PROMOTE SOFTWARE SHARING AMONGST
AGENCIES. WE AT GSA WOULD RATHER START OPERATION OF
THE FEDERAL SOFTWARE EXCHANGE PROGRAM AS CURRENTLY
ENVISIONED AND DOCUMENT AND ASSESS THE OPERATIONAL AND
ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM BEFORE WE ESTABLISH
WHICH
AN INSTITUTIONAL ORGANIZATION BEYOND THAT/IS ALREADY
IN PLACE. A RECOMMENDATION WAS MADE TO ESTABLISH AN
INTERAGENCY ADVISORY GROUP REGARDING THE OPERATIONS
OF THE SOFTWARE EXCHANGE PROGRAM. WE ARE CURRENTLY
EVALUATING THAT TO DETERMINE ITS UTILITY IN MAKING THE
CONCEPT OF SHARING OF SOFTWARE A SUCCESS.

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RELATED TO THE NOTION OF MORE EFFICIENT ACQUISITION AND
UTILIZATION OF SOFTWARE, THE CONFERENCE DID RECOMMEND
GREATER USE OF THE ADP FUND IN THIS AREA. WE HAVE A
PROJECT UNDERWAY AT GSA DIRECTED TO THE COMPETITIVE
ACQUISITION OF COMMERCIAL SOFTWARE PACKAGES FOR FEDERAL
AGENCY USE. RIGHT NOW, WE ARE TARGETING IN ON COBOL
DOCUMENTATION PACKAGES IN THAT NOT ONLY COULD WE
ACQUIRE SUCH PACKAGES AT LESS COST THAN WE ARE CURRENTLY
DOING, BUT IT WOULD FACILITATE THEIR AVAILABILITY TO
AGENCIES TO ASSIST THEM IN THEIR SOFTWARE DOCUMENTATION
EFFORTS.